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GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
WAR of KINGS
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In the wake of two catastrophic Annihilation events, the Universe is in a fragile and weakened state. With the fabric of space itself damaged, anomalous fissures are beginning to appear, fissures that could crack and spread, collapsing reality and letting in things that should not exist in our dimension.

Guided by the mystical insight of the newly returned Adam Warlock, the gun-slinging Star-Lord has forged a proactive team of proven cosmic champions ready to protect the vulnerable universe and prevent any large-scale disasters from ever happening again. Together, Star-Lord, Warlock, Martyr, Gamora, Drax, Mantis and Rocket Raccoon are the...

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

The War of Kings--a massive conflict between the Shi'ar Imperium and the Kree Empire--has begun, and the Guardians undertook two desperate missions to end hostilities before the conflagration engulfed the galaxy. Star-Lord led one team to reason with the Inhuman royal family, while Rocket Raccoon took a second to face Vulcan, Emperor of the Shi'ar.

However, Vulcan's flagship was teleport-shielded, and Rocket's crew found itself on the run from the Shi'ar with the fugitives known as the Starjammers.

That is, except for Adam Warlock. As a being of quantum-magic, he was able to pass through the teleport shield, where he came face to face with Vulcan...

STAR-LORD (PETER QUILL)

ADAM WARLOCK

MARTYR (PHYLA-VELL)

GAMORA

DRAX

MANTIS

ROCKET RACCOON

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ADAM WARLOCK, BATTLE MAGE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY.
I WILL SAY THIS JUST ONCE.
STAND YOUR FLEETS AND LEGIONS DOWN NOW, AND END THIS WAR.
VULCAN, EMPEROR OF THE SHI'AR.
OKAY, I HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS...
FIRST, WHO ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE?
AND SECOND...OR YOU'LL DO WHAT?
KA-KA-BOOM
HAMMER II, FLAGSHIP OF EMPEROR VULCAN, EDGE OF THE DISKADI SYSTEM.

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ALARM! ALARM! ALL IMPERIAL QUARTERS COMPROMISED!!!
THE EMPEROR IS IN JEOPARDY. DEPLOY FULL IMPERIAL GUARD STRENGTHS IMMEDIATELY.
ORACLE! IDENTIFY THE THREAT!
THE MIND SIGNATURE IS ECCENTRIC, MENTOR.
I AM READING SOME KIND OF ...MAGE.
SORCERY? BUT THAT'S... THERE IS NO LOGICAL... I MEAN...
OH, BY THE ELEVENTH ORDER! FIND ME GUARDSMAN MAGIQUE. NOW!
I WARNED YOU, TYRANT!
NO, YOU THREATENED ME. BIG DIFFERENCE. NO ONE THREATENS THE MAJESTOR.
AND WHAT'S THIS YOU'RE THROWING AT ME? IS THIS...
...MAGIC?

IT IS, ISN'T IT?
I CAN SMELL IT. I CAN TASTE IT.
AND WHEN ALL'S SAID AND DONE, IT MAY BE EXOTIC BUT IT'S JUST ANOTHER FORM OF ENERGY.
NHHHF!
GUESS WHAT I CAN DO?
AARGGH!
I'M A HIGH ORDER ENERGY MANIPULATOR, YOU WITLESS FUCKER!
UNHH!
SHI'AR MAJESTOR! LISTEN TO ME! YOUR WAR WITH THE KREE THREATENS THE VERY FABRIC OF SPACE-TIME!
IT COULD RIP CREATION APART AT THE SEAMS!
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE FATE OF THE UNIVERSE!
I AM THE UNIVERSE!

THE ROYAL CITY OF ATTILAN, HALA.
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY...
THE INHUMAN ROYAL FAMILY.
MEDUSA
GORGON
...I SPEAK FOR MY HUSBAND AND KING, BLACK BOLT. WE DO NOT RECOGNIZE YOUR AUTHORITY. YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS HERE.
LEAVE NOW BEFORE THERE IS ANY UNPLEASANTNESS.
KARNAK
BLACK BOLT
UNPLEASANTNESS? SORRY MISS BAD HAIR DAY, BUT WE'RE ALREADY WAAAAAAY PAST THAT.
BUG
GAMORA
JACK FLAG
STAR-LORD
MARTYR
PHYLA! GEEZ, WILL YOU LEAVE THIS TO ME?
'CAUSE YOU'RE DOING SUCH A FINE JOB, PETER?
WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU? DIPLOMACY, I SAID!
YEAH, THAT ALWAYS WORKS.
I ‹TIK!› THINK WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO ‹TIK!› SAY HERE IS...

...WE LIVE IN THIS GALAXY TOO, YOU KNOW?
I MEAN, IF THIS ‡TIK!‡ WAR OF YOURS BLOWS EVERYTHING UP, WHAT THEN?
THIS IS OUR ‡TIK!‡ BUSINESS BECAUSE IT AFFECTS US! THAT FACT ALONE MANDATES US WITH ALL THE AUTHORITY WE NEED.
ON BEHALF OF THE CITIZENS OF THE GALAXY, YOU MUST ‡TIK!‡ LISTEN TO US!
AND, INCIDENTALLY, YOU'VE GOT THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ‡TIK!‡ EYES.
STAND BACK, GORGON. I AM QUITE CAPABLE OF HANDLING GROTESQUE OVERTURES FROM RIFFRAFF LIKE THIS.
HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO THE QUEEN LIKE THAT!
WE ARE NOT UNSYMPATHETIC TO YOUR POSITION, STAR-LORD OF THE GUARDIANS.
BUT THE INHUMANS HAVE TAKEN DOMINION OVER THE KREE. TO VOUCHSAFE AN ANCIENT, MUTUAL DESTINY.
WE DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF CONSIDERING THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS. WE ARE REQUIRED TO MAKE HARD CHOICES, DRIVEN BY SELF-INTEREST.
THESE MAY NOT SUIT THE "REST" OF THE GALAXY...
THIS SORT OF THING IS EXACTLY WHY YOU DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT FOR THE TEAM, YOU KNOW?
...BUT THE SHI'AR THREATEN US. THEY INJURE US.
ONLY A FOOL WOULD NOT EXPECT US TO DEFEND OURSELVES.
ARE YOU A FOOL, STAR-LORD OF THE GUARDIANS?

OKAY, SOMEONE'S *REALLY* NOT LISTENING!
WHOA WHOA *WHOA!*
WEAPON! *WEAPON* DRAWN!
A THREAT TO THE QUEEN'S PERSON! *SEIZE* THEM!
GWOORR!
SEIZE *THIS*, HOOF-BOY!
UGHNN!

A CRASS AFFRONT AND IN THE ROYAL THRONE ROOM NO LESS.
THEY WILL PAY FOR THIS UNFORGIVABLE BREACH OF PROTOCOL, MY QUEEN!
HELLS TEETH, PHYLA! THIS IS THE SECOND FIGHT YOU'VE GOT ME INTO IN A SINGLE DAY!
WHEN THIS IS DONE, YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT ABOUT YOUR NEW ATTITUDE.
PETE, WHEN THIS IS DONE, WE'RE GOING TO BE TOO BUSY SAYING "HOW THE FUCK DID WE SURVIVE THAT?!"

KNOWHERE, GUARDIANS No.1.
I COULDN'T SLEEP.
HAS THERE BEEN ANY WORD FROM THE TEAMS, MANTIS?
STAR-LORD'S PEOPLE ARE NOT ANSWERING THEIR PASSPORT COMS, MOONDRAGON.
WE PRESUME THIS MEANS THEY ARE IN CONFERENCE WITH INHUMAN ROYALTY AND CANNOT BE INTERRUPTED.
AS FOR RACCOON AND OTHERS WHO WENT WITH HIM, WE HAVE VERY MUCH LOST CONTACT.
IT IS AS IF SIGNAL FROM THEM IS JAMMED.
NONE OF THAT SOUNDS LIKE GOOD NEWS.
IT SOUNDINK TO COSMO LIKE BUSINESS AS USUAL.
WITH GUARDIANS OF GALAXY, EVEN DULL MOMENTS ARE QUITE FRAUGHT.
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK...
WHAT'S A STARHAWK?
WHAT?
STARHAWK.
THE WORD'S BEEN IN MY HEAD EVER SINCE I CAME ON BOARD KNOWHERE.
DID EITHER OF YOU PUT IT THERE?

DEBRIEF ADAM WARLOCK
IQ [redacted],
BIOLOGY, METAPHYSICAL MANIPULATION.
VULCAN WAS...STRONG. TERRIFYINGLY STRONG. HE'S [redacted] OMEGA LEVEL MUTANT. I'VE SELDOM ENCOUNTERED [redacted] SO POTENT.
[redacted] SECONDS, HE HAD ROBBED SO MUCH POWER FROM ME, I NO LONGER HAD THE RESERVES TO TRANSPORT MYSELF CLEAR.
ALL I COULD DO WAS TRY TO EVADE HIM...
FZAAM FZAAM
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?
JUST CREATING A LITTLE ELBOW ROOM.
WHUD
GUUHHH!

THAT HURT. YOU HURT ME.
ZCHOOM
UGHK!
JUST STAY STILL AND DIE.
KTHOOM
I'VE DIED SEVERAL TIMES. IT'S NOT ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE.
GAAAHHH!

YOU WILL SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY
GET AWAY FROM ME! LEAVE ME ALONE!
UGHNN!
MAGIQUE! CRIPPLE HIM!
YES, MENTOR!
THERE! HE'S SNARED!
WHAT THE--?!
A SPELL-CASTER, EH? FASCINATING. THERE'S ONE OF EVERYTHING IN THE IMPERIAL GUARD.
I COMMEND YOU ON YOUR CRAFTWORK. THIS GLAMOUR IS BEAUTIFULLY WOVEN...

...UNFORTUNATELY, YOU'RE DEALING WITH A QUANTUM MAGICIAN.
I AM ILLUMINATED IN WAYS YOU CAN ONLY DREAM.
I AM WARLOCK!
YOUR SPELLS [redacted] MERE PARLOR TRICKS TO ME, GIRL...
YOUR RAW MAGIC IS MAGIC, HOWEVER.
I CAN'T MANIPULATE ENERGY THE WAY YOUR MASTER CAN, BUT I CAN RIP OUT YOUR GLAMOURS TO RECHARGE MYSELF!
NO! THAT HURTS! STOP IT! STOP IT!
OH, BOO-HOO. LIFE HURTS SOMETIMES.
TELL YOUR MASTER THIS ISN'T OVER.
P-P-PLEASE.

WHERE IS HE? WHERE IS THE WARLOCK?
MENTOR! YOUR NEXT WORDS HAD BETTER NOT BE [redacted]'S ESCAPED MAJESTOR."
THERE IS A VERY HIGH PERCENTAGE CHANCE THEY WILL BE, EMPEROR.
NO ONE DOES THAT TO ME. DO YOU HEAR?
NO ONE HURTS [redacted] LIKE THAT!
NO ONE BURSTS IN ON ME AND MAKES DEMANDS!
I WANT HIM FOUND! I WANT HIM DEAD! I WANT HIS HEAD ON A SPIKE!
I... [redacted] AT THE PLEASURE OF EMPEROR VULCAN.
AND YOU! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE A TALENTED ADEPT!
MAGIQUE IS TOO WEAK TO ANSWER FOR HERSELF, MAJESTOR, BUT I CAN SEE THE TRUTH IN HER MIND.
[redacted] DUEL WITH THE INTRUDER WAS NOT ENTIRELY ONE-SIDED.
SHE WAS ABLE TO PLACE A WITCH-MARK ON HIM.
IF HE'S MARKED, HE CAN'T ESCAPE. EVER.
HE COULD FLEE TO ANOTHER UNIVERSE, [redacted] WE WOULD STILL FIND HIM...
...FIND HIM, AND FINISH [redacted]

ATTILAN.
NO! THIS STOPS RIGHT NOW!
THIS IS NOT HOW WE BEHAVE BEFORE THE THRONE!
THIS IS NOT HOW WE TREAT GUESTS!
SHOOM
CRYSTAL SHE BARED A BLADE AT THE QUEEN!
WITH RESPECT, COUSIN GORGON, SO WHAT?
AND SHE BLASTED ME.
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE BETTER.
YOUR INTERVENTION IS UNNECESSARY, SISTER.
THE SITUATION HAS BEEN CONTAINED.

SITUATION? THESE PEOPLE HAVE COME HERE WITH LEGITIMATE CONCERNS!
WE SHOULD HEAR THEM OUT! AND WE SHOULD CERTAINLY DISCOVER IF [redacted] ANY EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THEIR CONCERNS!
THEIR NOTIONS [redacted] UPON [redacted] AND SPECULATION. THEY ARE SCARE-MONGERING.
OUR WAR WITH THE SHI'AR MAY SHATTER THE POLITICAL MAP OF THE COSMOS, SISTER.
DON'T YOU THINK IT MIGHT BE PRUDENT TO CHECK THAT IT'S NOT GOING TO SHATTER THE COSMOS ITSELF?
THE CLAIM IS NONSENSE [redacted] WE WILL NOT ENTERTAIN IT.
THESE... PEOPLE HAVE NO RIGHT TO MAKE DEMANDS OF US.
KARNAK, GORGON.
HAVE THE ELITE GUARD ESCORT OUR VISITORS TO AN EXIT POINT. MAKE IT CLEAR TO THEM THEY [redacted] NOT WELCOME TO--
WOW, LADY. WHAT IS IT GOING TO TAKE TO GET YOU TO LISTEN?

NO!
HOLY SHIT.
PHYLA? OH, DAS'T.
PHYLA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? LET HER GO!
THESE... PEOPLE...DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OTHER LANGUAGE, STAR-LORD...
ARE YOU NUTS? LET HER GO!
...PERHAPS NOW THEY'LL LISTEN.
IN THE NAME OF RANDAC, DON'T MAKE THIS WORSE! I WAS TRYING TO HELP YOU! I WAS TRYING TO SPEAK FOR YOU!

WE DON'T DO THIS! WE DON'T THREATEN LIVES!
YOU JUST CROSSED A LINE, PHYLA-VELL!
YOU JUST TOOK AWAY ANY MORAL AUTHORITY WE HAD WHEN WE WALKED ■ HERE!
SOMETIMES YOU'VE GOT TO--
LET HER GO! NOW!
MANTIS? IT'S PETER. TRANSPORT US OUT OF HERE.. FAST.
YOUR HIGHNESS, YOU HAVE MY APOLOGIES.
THIS ISN'T HOW I WANTED THIS TO GO AT ALL.
KNOWHERE.
THE CORTEX HAS GONE INTO CASCADE.
SOMETHINK NON-STANDARD IS TELEPORTINK THROUGH. STAND BY!
IT'S WARLOCK. CAN'T YOU HEAR HIS MIND?
WELL, AREN'T YOU ■A'S SUPER-DUPER-TELEPATH TODAY?

ADAM?
ADAM, WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?
I DON'T KNOW. WE GOT SEPARATED.
YOU LOOK PALE. DIFFERENT.
NO. I'M FINE. REALLY.
HE CAME FACE TO FACE WITH VULCAN. HE BARELY ESCAPED WITH HIS LIFE.
VULCAN'S A MONSTER. THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO NEGO-TIATING WITH HIM.
AND I HAVE A SHARP PAIN SUDDENLY, THAT--
OH. OH NO.
I...
SHE MARKED ME. THE IMPERIAL GUARD MAGIC-USER LEFT A WITCH-MARK ON ME.
OH, THAT'S NOT GOOD AT ALL.
INCOMING! PETER'S TEAM IS COMING BACK!
--UNDISCIPLINED UNBELIEVABLE SHIT-HEADED TRIGGER-HAPPY BEHAVIOR!
I'VE A GOOD MIND TO JUST KICK HER OFF THIS TEAM!

AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK ME WHAT HAPPENED?
COSMO IS SEEINK SOME OF IT FOR HIMSELF.
HUH?
OH NO. OH YOU ARE FUCKING KIDDING ME WITH THIS!
I TOLD YOU TO LET HER GO!
AND I TOLD YOU TO GROW SOME.
DON'T YOU SEE? NOW WE'VE GOT A BARGAINING CHIP.
NOW WE CAN FORCE THEM TO NEGOTIATE!
THIS IS RIDICULOUS! RELEASE ME NOW!
OH PHYLA...
BY TAKING HOSTAGES? ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FREAKING MIND?
HONESTLY PHYLA, Y--
OKAY, NOW I'M SMELLING DOG BISCUITS, AND NOT COSMO'S BRAND.
UH, WHAT'S THAT GLOW?
MULTIPLE TELEPORT SIGNALS! TWO TOTALLY DIFFERENT SIGNATURES!
IT IS NOT CONTINUUM CORTEX. IT IS AUTONOMOUS SITE-TO-SITE!
SECURITY! SECURITY TO CORTEX NOW!
I THINK WE REALLY PISSED SOMEBODY OFF.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.

THERE SHE IS!
WITCH-MARK LOCATED!
I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING REALLY BAD IN A PREVIOUS LIFE.
NEXT ISSUE: SHOT BY BOTH SIDES!

WAR of KINGS

NEXT ISSUE!

COSMO SAY, "BRINK IT ON!"
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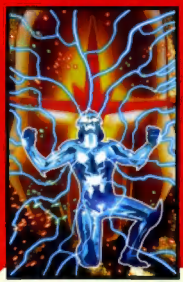
THE WAR RAGES ON!



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